

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 13, 2014

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

We write to you today to express our profound concern about recent allegations regarding the deaths of veterans waiting for care from Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Centers and your announcement of a "face-to-face audit" at all VA medical facilities. It is highly appropriate to immediately address the persistent process and organizational failures that have been emerging on a regular basis.

The allegation that the Phoenix VA Health Care System maintained an alternative list, where veterans' appointments were arranged in a shell game to manipulate the historic backlog for care, is deeply troubling. If these allegations are found to be true, this would represent a massive failure of the VA, which already is struggling to maintain its credibility, and demonstrate a complete breach of faith with the community it is mandated to serve.

The gravity of these allegations demands a thorough, open and transparent investigation. As the VA conducts its internal audit, we urge you to partner with an outside organization and conduct a joint review, or use a third-party auditor to examine the claims made against the VA to help ensure the review is independent and transparent.

At the completion of the audit, in addition to a review of the findings and recommendations, we request that you provide us with the average time between patients presenting themselves and when they receive treatment at all VA facilities in Tennessee. Our veterans deserve better, and we intend to closely monitor the investigation to ensure they receive every benefit they have earned.

Thank for your consideration of this matter and your service to our nation.

Sincerely,



Bob Corker
United States Senator



Lamar Alexander
United States Senator